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Subj 56c

16 May 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: COD

SUBJECT: Documentation as it Pertains to SE/PC Operations

REFERENCE: a. Secret Memo dtd 1 May 1952, to ADPC from DD/P;
Subject: Documentation.
b. Secret Memo dtd 15 April 1952, to DCI from IG;
Subject: Documentation.
c. Secret Memo dtd 8 April 1952, to IG from []
[]; Subject: Problems of Concern to TSS.

1. With reference to the opinions expressed in reference (c) regarding certain SE/PC agent operations into Albania and Bulgaria, we fully realize that []'s memorandum represents the view of a specialist who, without access to the wide range of considerations and factors which govern the mounting of SE/PC covert operations into the Balkans, tends to overemphasize the role of his own particular field of specialization. We feel that []'s comments, with reference to 1951 Albanian and Bulgarian operations, reflect this limited knowledge of the operational problems involved, quite apart from those of documentation, and reveal a somewhat faulty concept of the role of documentation in the partisan-type operations mounted by SE/PC during the 1951 operational season.

2. With regard to the eight recommendations made by the Inspector General to the Director of Central Intelligence in reference (b), SE/PC would like to submit comments in corresponding order:

a. Re paragraph 1. The inability of the Intelligence Division, TSS to provide the capability for fully documenting agents in the Balkan area is not sufficient reason for halting penetration operations. Some of our present operations are, in fact, reconnaissance missions designed, among other things, to provide documentation intelligence. To cut off the source of documentation intelligence in denied areas would only deprive our documentation experts of the very support they require in order to develop proper documentation. There is, therefore, no assurance that a six to twelve month halt in agent operations would result in better documentation capabilities for TSS in the SE Division area. The character of past SE/PC operations against the Balkan satellites has been such, moreover, that documentation has not been essential to the accomplishment of the mission. The missions mounted have been short term "in-and-out" reconnaissance operations designed to develop the operational intelligence upon which future long range

penetration missions

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penetration missions, aimed at building clandestine agent nets, could be mounted. We are now barely entering the phase where documentation assumes importance in aiding our agents to survive in hostile territory.

b. Re paragraph 2. This Division in requesting documentation has always given TSS all appropriate information concerning the cover desired for its agents.

c. Re paragraph 3. This Division has always followed all recommendations and instructions received from TSS in documenting its agents. We hold, however, that at times operational necessity will dictate that a mission be mounted even without documentation, if such documentation is not available and the mission is essential in the fulfillment of this Division's responsibilities. In many cases guerrilla operations can be so planned that documents are not needed in the accomplishment of the mission.

d. Re paragraph 4. This Division sees absolutely no necessity for TSS to be informed concerning the targets of agent operations.

e. Re paragraph 5. TSS already has had appropriate channels established for it within the SE Division area. The [] Documentation Center is being activated and will report as a service unit through the CIA Senior Representative to SE/PC. All correspondence with the Center, including recommendations from TSS and requests from the Center for TSS guidance, flows via the SE Division by pouch to [] [].

f. Re paragraph 6. We have hitherto been under the assumption that personnel trained for the [] Documentation Center by TSS would be qualified to fill in and complete blank documents and that it was TSS responsibility to disseminate whatever technical information would be necessary to keep its personnel up-to-date on documentation changes. For Washington to complete all documents used in the field would be an extremely cumbersome and time-consuming procedure, and the consequent delays would gravely impede the development of any penetration program. This work should be done by trained and qualified personnel at the [] Documentation Center in close cooperation with the case officers mounting Balkan operations.

g. Re paragraph 7. This Division has endeavored within the limits of existing capabilities to meet requirements placed upon it by TSS for documentation collection.

h. Re paragraph 8. This Division has slots in its overseas tables of organization which could be assigned to a limited number of specialists if the Documents Branch will provide the requisite trained personnel.

3. With regard to

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3. With regard to the specific allegations made by Mr. Hirsch cited in reference (a), which relate to SE/PC operations, we have the following comments:

a. Concerning paragraph 5, attachment 1.A to reference (c), []'s comments are based upon incomplete knowledge of the facts and are misleading.

In both the Albanian and Bulgarian operations mounted during 1951 there was no need to equip the agents with the complete documentation necessary to explain their presence in the area. These operations were essentially of a reconnaissance and paramilitary nature. The agent teams were sent in to operate as partisans. They were heavily armed and carried such other items as walkie-talkie radios, gold and National Committee credentials, which would have compromised them instantly if challenged, even if they had possessed complete and valid documentation. Documents, where carried, were not for the purpose of supporting travel or establishing legal residence in Albania or Bulgaria. They were provided against a contingency where a basic document might be sufficient to pass an agent through a casual check.

It should be stressed forcefully that we have no evidence whatever that the loss, compromise or capture of any SE/PC agent was in any way due to possession of incomplete or faulty documentation.

Up to the end of 1951, approximately 39 Albanian agents were infiltrated by SE/PC. Of this total twelve exfiltrated, eight are presently active (wintering in Yugoslavia) and two defected to Yugoslavia, giving a total of twenty-two survivors. This contrasts with []'s assertion that five Albanian infiltrates survived. Of those lost, four were captured, nine killed and the status of the three remaining agents is unknown.

b. Concerning paragraph 5 (b), attachment 1.A to reference (c), Bulgarian agent teams likewise did not rely upon documentation for the accomplishment of their missions but operated as partisans. If their incidental documentation included coding errors, we see it as the responsibility of TSS to provide sufficient and accurate documentation guidance to SE Division documents personnel in the field.

c. Concerning paragraph 5 (c), attachment 1.A to reference (c), reference to mass executions apparently refers to the Tirana spy trials of November 1951, at which four-fifths of the defendants were Yugoslav and British agents. The few SE/PC agents involved were not relying upon documentation to operate in Albania but were from guerrilla-type teams on reconnaissance missions involving illegal existence within the country. The presence or absence of valid documentation had no bearing on the capture of these agents.

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4. In a continuing

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4. In a continuing effort to improve documentation intelligence and to provide effective documentation support facilities for Balkan operations, SE/PC has offered a bonus to agents obtaining specified documents and intelligence regarding their use. On at least one occasion, a penetration team successfully obtained such documentation by forcibly disposing of two local Communist functionaries. The sum of approximately twenty-five thousand dollars has been appropriated from SE/PC funds for a Documentation Center []. Three persons have been specially recruited by SE/PC, trained by TSS, and sent to the field to staff the SE Division Documents Center. An additional man is in process.

5. It should be pointed out that members of this Division attending []'s orientation lectures on documentation in January of this year strongly advised him of the inadvisability of making, in the course of his lectures, charges against our country operations which were based on sweeping generalizations and lacked the factual basis required to support his facile interpretation of operational difficulties.

6. Although SE Division cannot concur in the recommendation that its activities, which are basic to the accomplishment of its NSC 10/2 mission, be subordinated to the requirements of a technical service, the Division is aware that documentation will assume increasing importance in the coming phases of building permanent clandestine organizations in the Balkan satellites. The Division will, therefore, continue to give the problem of documentation intelligence the highest possible priority as an operational task. In turn, we anticipate that TSS will give no less consideration both to SE Division's operational problems and its requirements for accurate documentation support. Consequently, we should like to reassure [] that SE Division is prepared at all times to make every effort to cooperate with TSS on all matters of mutual interest.

[]
Deputy for Policy Coordination, SE

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